

ated any action to bring the books and other important documents lying in the India Office Library, London;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) when it is likely to be brought back?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a). Yes, Sir.

(b) 3473 rolls of microfilms of important documents from the India Office Library, London have been acquired so far by the National Archives of India. Negotiations continue for further acquisition. Inspite of our best efforts, the India Office Library, London has expressed its inability to part with original books and documents.

(c) The process of acquisition is an ongoing programme considering the volume of the material in the India Office Library.

Rail Transport in North Bengal

1884. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received requests from people of North Bengal to develop rail transport system in that area;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a). Yes, Sir.

(b) There have been demands for the early completion of the Eklakhi-Balurghat new line.

(c) On account of acute constraint of resources, no funds could be allotted to this project since 1987-88. Progress of this project will depend upon availability of resources in the coming years.

[Translation]

Linking of Jhansi by Air

1885. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to link Jhansi by air;

(b) if so, when; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a). No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) It is not possible to air link Jhansi at the present juncture due to commercial and operational reasons.

[English]

Performance of Indira Gandhi National Open University

1886. SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether performance of the Indira Gandhi National Open University Centre set up at Kavaratti is excellent;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to establish this Centre at Kavaratti permanently on full time basis; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c). The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established in September, 1985 by an Act of Parliament for the introduction and promotion of the Open University and Distance Education systems in the educational pattern of the country and for the coordination and determination of standards in such systems. The University has established an extensive delivery system through its Regional and Study Centres situated in different parts of the country. Study Centres of IGNOU have been provided with accommodation by existing educational institutions. They generally function in the evenings and on holidays.

The Study Centre at Kavaratti in Lakshadweep was established in October, 1989 and is located in the Jawaharlal Nehru College. It caters to about 100 students who are enrolled in IGNOU's Bachelor Degree Programme and the Certificate Course in Food and Nutrition. According to IGNOU the Study Centre at Kavaratti is functioning satisfactorily.

Deforestation in Assam

1887 SHRIDWARAKA NATH DAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that deforestation is going on unabated in Karimganj and Hailakandi districts of Assam; and

(b) the steps being taken to check this deforestation and arrange for speedy afforestation in that area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOR-

ESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a). The State Government reports that no deforestation has taken place in the reserved forests of Karimganj and Hailakandi districts in Assam, except for some sporadic incidents of encroachments;

(b) Appropriate action has been taken to stop encroachments and felling of trees in the reserved forest area. Moreover, massive afforestation under 20-point programme has been taken up in the degraded forests.

Clearing of Baggages at Airports

1888. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the procedures for clearing baggages at the airports have been revised;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether private contractors have been appointed to supply manpower to clear the baggage of passengers at the airports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Customs under Department of Revenue have made certain procedural changes for speedy clearance of baggages to ensure better passenger facilitation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Rail Link between Gadag-Harihar (Karnataka)

1889. SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: